



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** July 12, 2018

The Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance today issued the following statement on the passage of H.R. 200 *"The Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act."*

Commercial fishermen throughout the Gulf of Mexico watched yesterday as Congress advanced a harmful piece of legislation that puts the future of our businesses at risk. H.R. 200 is a Trojan Horse – falsely claiming to help recreational fishermen and add more “flexibility” to our nation’s wildly successful fishery law, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Instead, H.R. 200 will add more restrictions and levy additional taxes on commercial fishermen, open the door to eliminating our representation on regional management bodies, ban the use of management tools that are proven to work, and create loopholes that could encourage unsustainable fishing practices. H.R. 200 will hurt commercial fishermen like us without helping recreational fishermen.

We were encouraged to see bipartisan opposition to this bad bill, and we thank the Congressional leaders that listened to the concerns raised by the thousands of commercial fishermen, charter fishermen, recreational fishermen, restaurants, seafood suppliers, chefs, seafood consumers and other concerned citizens that opposed this bill throughout the nation.

Commercial fishermen are the blue collar, hardworking heartbeat of America. H.R. 200 hurts us and hurts the fish populations our businesses rely on. Passage of H.R. 200 is a costly mistake – we don’t need a bill that hurts commercial fishermen in order to address recreational fishing concerns

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*The Shareholders' Alliance is the largest organization of commercial snapper and grouper fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico. We work hard to ensure that our fisheries are sustainably managed so our fishing businesses can thrive and our fishing communities can exist for future generations. We are the harvesters that provide much of the American public with a reliable source of domestically caught wild Gulf seafood, and we do this through a philosophy that sustainable seafood and profitable fishing businesses depend on healthy fish populations.*

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